

Caching Etiquette Guide by Cymbaline

Yes, Virginia, there really is a Santa Claus. Sure, he is a mythical figure of fiction, but one who is firmly rooted in historical fact. Even as he has evolved over the years, millions of children (and adults) around the world know by heart the basic rules on getting on his good side: “He knows when you've been naughty, and he knows when you've been nice.” The good kiddies get the cool gifts; the bad ones get lumped in (pun intended) with Charlie Brown.

You are probably asking yourself, “That's fantastic, but what does this have to do with caching?” It is a bit of a stretch, but it's also simple: Santa never wrote down those rules. They are nothing more than general etiquette recommendations to getting more than Charlie's lump of coal. Like Santa, caching has managed to evolve quite a bit over it's short existence. The unwritten “rules” have also evolved somewhat as well.

So, what are these “rules?” Well, there are no “rules” for caching.

I'll say it again: There are no “rules” for caching.

(I'll pause a moment while the gasping in the crowd subsides, the listing sites have a communal coronary, various organizations around the world collectively search for clean underwear, and some government agencies say “AHA! I KNEW IT!”)

Let me be clear. Yes, there **are** rules for caching that are well documented: cache site listing guidelines and regulations, various federal, state and local government laws and codes, individual agency regulation overrides, etc. This paper is NOT a replacement for – thought it could theoretically be an adjunct to – those established rules. What is missing are “rules” for the actual ACT of caching itself.

This document is an attempt at breaking down some of the more common (or uncommon) aspects of the act of caching into a recommended Etiquette Guide. It is not geared towards any size or type of cache, cache location, or to any particular listing site. This guide is not the first of it's kind, nor will it be the last. One of the better ones is the Geocachers' Creed. Please give it a read, as this guide echoes many of the values already listed there. It can be found at <http://www.geocreed.info>.

The guide is broken down into the following three categories or chapters: “Cache Physics and Logistics,” “Cache Contents,” and finally “Putting it All Together.” Each section provides **recommended** best practices involved in caching, which ideally will provide for better experience for both the cache hider and the seekers to follow. Hopefully this will prove to be of value to you. I enjoyed writing it, and I hope you enjoy reading it.

Jason Buckler (aka “Cymbaline”)
Originally written January/February 2006
Revised April 17, 2007

Cache Hiding and Hunting: Physics and Logistics

At a high level, there does not seem to be much involved in placing or hunting a cache. Someone places a container somewhere, and other people go find it. Pretty simple, no? Looking closer, however, there are a number of things that both the hider and the hunter need to be aware of.

Hiding a Cache

Let's discuss three things for the hider to give consideration to: *safety, security, and stability*. (I call them the “Three S's.” Cute, huh?) Depending on the cache placement or location, some or none of the following will apply.

Safety: When placing the cache, give some thought as to how a potential hunter may look for it. Do they need to approach from a specific route? Are there multiple ways to the cache? Any potential perils lurking about for the finder? Address those in your cache description as appropriate. Placing a cache in a hornet's nest is highly discouraged. Placing a cache in an artificial hornet's nest, meanwhile, is perfectly fine, though you should expect some nasty emails about it. If your cache is located near automobile traffic, put yourself in the finder's shoes – will you be safe? Likewise, placing your cache in a physically precarious position for the finder is fine; just make sure you document it in the cache description, especially if specialized equipment is needed. Remember, this is a game for all ages, and having grandpa fall off the cliff or seeing the precocious five-year-old skip off into oncoming traffic just won't do. Keep your finders safe, or give them fair warning as necessary on what they *need* to do to be safe.

Security: As the cache hider, you are indirectly responsible for those who come after you. Yes, yes, future hunters always “do so at their own risk.” When you place your cache, make sure that it will not provide undue stress on the hunters in the form of having to explain what they are doing poking around/in/on such-and-such bush/tree/aircraft/building/etc - especially to someone in a Position of Authority. Do you want to be responsible for providing someone a ride in the back seat of a police car? Yes, it has occasionally happened. Give some thought to it before you place the container and drive off. Preferably, contact the landowner/property owner/US Navy (in the case of battleships – yes, such a cache legally exists) and obtain permission for your cache to be there. Security also manifests itself in “safety”, too: placing that cache in the tree in the park is fine, but not if it's right next door to an obvious crack house. A cache next to a tree in the middle of the forest is also fine, but not if there's a moonshine still only 50 yards away. (Hint: folks who run them often employ a “shoot first, bury later” policy.) Make your hunters as comfortable as possible when it comes to their personal security.

An often-overlooked security aspect is the container itself. Some areas require that only certain types of containers be used, or you may need to use a certain type of container in a certain area. Use common sense when selecting your container. Ammo boxes are a good choice for in-the-forest or rural locations, but not a good option for use next to a public works project, such as a water tower. Likewise, plastic containers are often preferred in very public areas, but won't stand a chance against hungry, curious critters in the woods. Metal pipe containers aren't ever a good choice anywhere – it's very, very easy for them to be mistakenly identified as pipe bombs. Many locations (some parks and federal lands, for example) require that the cache name, cache identification number and the name and contact information of the hider be clearly written on and/or visible from the outside of the cache. Make sure you're aware of any container regulations. If in doubt, ask members of your local caching community or you local cache approver/listing site.

Stability: Here's a scenario: You have the perfect location for a cache, you place it, and a week later you notice that several people say they can't find it. You go to check on it, and sure enough, it's gone. In retrospect, perhaps the bole of the tree right at the waterline of the creek wasn't the best place for your cache, seeing as how the past five days rain have raised the creek level two feet, washing away your hide in the process. Scenarios like that occur now and then; it happens, and there's nothing technically wrong with it. Giving a little thought to your cache placement ahead of time can save you excessive time and aggravation down the road. Some questions to ask yourself are: "Is the location secure? Will someone else find it and steal it? Any potential concerns for the location six/twelve months from now?" You need to be committed to performing scheduled and unscheduled maintenance on your cache. Logbooks get wet and need to be replaced. Cache contents occasionally need to be replenished or illegal items removed. Caches in high-traffic areas tend to have higher maintenance (and replacement) needs. Remember: If it's there, they will come. If it's well maintained, they will enjoy it.

In addition to the "Three S's," there are three other items to consider and clarify, though the latter two many not be relevant to every hide: *Permission, Parking, and Environmental*.

Permission: This should be fairly obvious. If you place a cache on private property, *obtain permission from the proper person/authority!* Examples of private property are A) property you do not own; and B) property not owned by federal, state, local, city, or county/parish government. The rest? Yep, it's private property – get permission first. It's also not a bad idea to obtain permission for civil property (that'd be the federal/state/local/county property again) if you are unaware of or not familiar with any permissions and/or policies that may be in place. If in doubt, ask a fellow cacher, a member of your local caching organization, or your local cache reviewer. Many areas are off-limits for the placement in caches, either by law or by regulation. If you can't obtain permission or clarification, don't place the cache.

Parking: In some cases, providing parking coordinates is a good thing. Quite often, there are many ways to access a cache. If you would prefer finders to start their hunt at a certain point, then you'll need to provide them with a place to start (or park their car). A good example is when your cache is placed on private property, surrounded by *other* private property, and there's only one *legal* way to access it. Or, perhaps there's a not-well-known trail head parking area that finders should use, as opposed to pulling off the road somewhere nearby. Use your best judgment. Parking coordinates are definitely not a requirement, but if you think it will alleviate potential problems or headaches, then use them.

Environmental: In all cases, do consider any potential environmental impact that people looking for your cache may cause. Yes, finders are supposed to be cognizant of their search methods and not destroy things looking for your cache, but if you're hiding a well-camouflaged micro container in the middle of a bush/tree in the middle of the woods/public park... Well, let's just say that after the first hour or so it's quite possible that your mild-mannered, well-meaning finder/hunter may start to lose patience and the ability to control their search methods. How many times have you come across an area that looks as if wild boars were in a fight to the death for control for the herd? The cause? Frustrated finders looking for the cache. No, they shouldn't have done that, but it does happen. Bottom line: Please consider any potential environmental impact, including potential social trails. If you have concerns, ask your local caching community.

This concludes the basic things to keep in mind when hiding a cache: the “Three S's” of Safety, Security, and Stability, and the “Two P's and E” (sorry, no catchy phrase) of Permission, Parking, and Environmental. Time to move on to the the hunt!

Hunting a Cache

“I'm going caching!” This is what caching is all about. The hidiers have hidden the caches, and it's your job to go find them. So off you go!

Wait! Don't go just yet. Just as the the hider has some guidelines to go by in order to make your experience enjoyable, you have some things to consider, too. Remembering these things will keep the caching experience fun and exciting for you and for those who come after you, as well as giving the cache owner a hand now and then.

Safety: Like the hider, you have a responsibility to safety – namely, your own. Do you think the cache is in the transformer/snake hole/owl's nest/exhaust vent? Are you planning on just thrusting your hand in there? Please – don't do it, or at least think about your plan of attack first. Use common sense, a flashlight, a tool, a stick, or a combination of the above. Trips to the emergency room aren't cool. Likewise, keep track of your environment and surroundings. Unsavory characters nearby? Move on and hunt later. Spot a black bear walking 50 yards away? Get away as fast and as quietly as you can; preferably without screaming, though silent crying is fine. (Needing a change of pants afterwards is perfectly understandable.) Thinking of jumping down that 15 feet from the ledge as opposed to walking around the extra 300 feet to the cache? Not a good idea. Common sense is an invaluable (and, unfortunately, an often underused) tool – use it.

Hunting/Locating: Well, duh! This is why you're here! But how are you going to go about it? To start, we'll list a few do's and don'ts applicable to any hunt.. Once again, common sense is the best recommendation, though sometimes it's hard to follow. This list is a far from being comprehensive, but do use it as a starting point:

DON'T denude that tree/bush/animal/bystander in an attempt to find a clue or container.

DON'T remove all the ground cover in the landscaping, even if you ARE a horticulturist.

DON'T turn over stones without replacing them in their original position.

DON'T move the cache to a location that you think “is a better spot.”

DON'T recover a container in 2 feet of cover if you found it in 2 inches of cover. Likewise..

DON'T recover a container in 2 inches of cover if you found it in 2 feet of cover. And..

DON'T just walk away from a cache without replacing it.

DON'T destroy property or the environment in your search.

DO respect private property.

DO respect local laws and those who enforce them.

DO make note of how the cache is positioned **before** you move/remove it.

DO replace the cache **exactly** as you found it.

DO repair the area of your search to the condition you found it in *or better*.

(This **INCLUDES** the areas you searched where you *didn't* find the cache.)

DO treat the cache as if it were one you placed.

DO be mindful of non-cachers in the area of your search who don't know what you're doing.

When in doubt, **DON'T** trumps **DO**.

At this point, we will assume you have found the cache. Woo-hoo! Feel free to do the “I found the cache” dance of your choosing.

Before you sign the log and/or while your trades, make a quick inspection of the cache container. Is it damaged in any way? Is the log soaked and unusable? Are you equipped to make temporary or permanent repairs? (You are? Great! Do it!) Let the cache owner know of any problems remaining and those you have corrected. They will be very appreciative, as it may save or create a maintenance trip for them. Inspect the contents of the cache, too. If you see something that is only recognizable as once being inorganic, but is now green, furry and sentient (growling caches are a definite concern), take it with you and dispose of it (or make it a new pet!).

Finally, it's time to replace the cache. You did remember to make a mental note of how it was placed beforehand, right? Reverse the removal process and put it back like you found it. But wait! Is that creepy guy with the nervous twitch watching your every move? If needed, be discreet when you replace the cache, even if it requires you delaying a bit. The next person won't find it if it's stolen immediately after you leave!

Cache Contents

So what goes into a cache? Every cache is unique, though in proportion to size most are very similar. As stated previously, this guide is not geared towards any particular cache type or size, so this is a brief overview of what you may encounter in a cache and the proper Etiquette for dealing with them.

This section divides cache contents into six categories: the log; normal trade items; above-normal trade items; “hitchhikers”; personal/signature items, and “junk.” All of these items are placed into a container of some sort.

A quick word about containers: On the smaller end of the scale, the container may only contain just a log. Larger containers will often contain the log and any number of the items listed above and detailed below, and potentially be of large enough size to house one's child or a small pony, though using either of these as a trade item is generally frowned upon.

“The log”: Every cache in existence (physical caches, at least) has a logbook of some sort in it – at least, they're supposed to.. A log may be a sheet or strip of paper, a spiral notebook, hardbound notebook, steno tablet, a pad of post-it notes (not recommended; they come apart too easily), or similar type items. It's there for you to log your entry of finding the cache, an “I was here!”, so to speak.. Some are only big enough to write your name and date, so that's pretty straightforward. Historically, finders would write something of their experience on the way to the cache, at the cache location, etc. As such, older caches usually have wonderful logs to read. Sadly, this practice seems to have mostly fallen out of practice, though some finders persevere with the tradition – perhaps you'll help revive it? If you do any item trading, it's also proper etiquette to list what you took from the cache and what you left in return. What you write is up to you, but being creative is always fun for later finders! Remember: the log is not a trade item, so leave it in the cache.

Normal Trade Items: Items in this category make up the bulk of trade items found in caches larger than micro-sized. Common “normal” trade items include dollar store goods (yet may be more than that in cost), “McToys” (a euphemism for toys provided in fast food kids meals), yard sale items, trade show goodies/freebies (logo'd letter openers, pens, pins, squeeze balls, etc), items “acquired” from ones' employer, pocket-sized outdoor gear (tissues, hand wipes, emergency ponchos, solar blankets, etc), key chains, new decks of playing cards, small toys for kids, unused AA batteries... hopefully you get the picture. These are relatively inexpensive items for the most part, and if the cache is lost or stolen the hider or finder won't lose any sleep over it.

Above-Normal Trade Items: Items in this category are generally of a slightly higher to definitely higher cost than the prior group. Larger toys, gift cards (\$5 and up), small electronics (trade show walkmans, USB memory keys/sticks, etc), larger electronics (rechargeable batteries/chargers, computer memory DIMMs, gameboys, etc), games (computer, console, and board), CDs (original, not pirated!), new T-shirts, hats, larger carabiners, etc. Generally, if you sense it's worth more than a couple of bucks, it probably falls into this category.

Hitchhikers: Hitchhikers are those unique items which have a mission of traveling from cache to cache or to a particular destination. Several types exist, as well as people creating their own. A few examples include geocaching.com's “Travel Bug”, which is an item that has a dog tag attached to it and can be tracked on that site. A “Traveler Tag” is a similar tagged item, with the tracking tag provided by travelertags.com. Another example of a hitchhiker is a “geocoin”, which is a non-currency decorative coin, usually without a tag attached.. Yet another example is someone just

placing an item in a cache with an attached note saying “I want to go to destination XYZ, please help me out.” Hitchhikers are items have been set free into the wild by someone. As such, they don't belong to you, nor are they really trade items. Hitchhikers will be discussed in more detail later.

Personal/Signature Items: Have you ever found an item in a cache that has a name on it, and perhaps a date? Maybe it was some sort of customized geocoin, a wooden nickel, an engraved carabiner, or a handmade wire figurine? Those are examples of personal or signature items. Typically, some cachers will create a signature item as an additional way of saying “I was here, and I'm leaving something to prove it.” Some of these are rather intricate, such as a piece of handmade jewelry, some are functionally utilitarian (my personal favorite of this type is a travel toothpick container that I take on business trips), while others are just whimsical and/or fun, such as a miniature deck of playing cards. The key thing to keep in mind about these types of items is that someone took the time to create it. These items range in cost from less than a dollar to \$10 or more. As with hitchhikers, we will discuss these further later on in this Guide.

“Junk”: Yes, you will also occasionally find junk in caches, which is unfortunate. If you find these items, take it upon yourself to improve the quality of the cache by removing these items and leaving something else instead. It has yet to be understood why other people would deem these things “appropriate trade items” - perhaps they've discovered them in their pockets and decide to use the cache container as a personal trash can? Real-life examples that of “junk” that I've encountered include well-expired discount coupons; broken McToys, used golf balls, cash register receipts, melted army men, broken marbles, old house keys, paper clips, the tape from a cassette **without** the cassette, postmarked envelopes with the address removed, used Eurorail passes, broken lighters, empty matchbooks, random dirt-covered rocks, chewed drinking straws... I could go on, but hopefully you get the idea. Please, don't leave these items in caches, and do your best to remove them.

This completes the core groups of items that you may encounter in a cache. Occasionally there will be items that could fit into multiple categories, or may have a special use or purpose. For instance, an item may be marked as “First to Find Prize.” These items are, as the name implies, reserved for the cacher who is first to find that particular cache. If you happen to be that cacher, then by all means take it if you desire (it's still good form to leave something in trade), or leave it for the next person. Some caches may also have a “theme” behind them, whereby all items in the cache are supposed to be of a particular type or style, such as all items are the color pink, or all items are postcards, or are composed entirely of holiday-type items (such as Halloween or independence Day). In these cases, try to stick with the theme.

In our next section, we will learn how to put it all together – stocking a cache for placement, finding a cache, and how to fairly exchange or trade items in the cache. Ready? Let's go!

Putting it All Together: Going Caching!

Now let's put everything together. So far, we've covered general things to keep in mind when hiding and hunting a cache, as well as the types of things you might find in them. This section will integrate some of those points already discussed with some general recommendations on proper etiquette when "out caching." Remember that in the introduction I said that "there are no rules in caching," so think of these as guidelines for you to consider. Ideally you will find yourself enjoying the caching experience more and may even find yourself appreciating your fellow cachers even more.

"Going caching" in this context is implied as "going to find a cache." However, it can also mean "going to place a cache." So, before we get started with finding one, let me add a few additional things about hiding a cache in addition to those listed previously.

Cache Hiding

First, make sure you check and read any guidelines that have been established by your cache listing host (geocaching/terracing/navicaching/etc dot com) and abide by them. For example, most of them have restrictions on what can or can't be placed into caches, usually for good reason. Generally, items such as knives, lighters and food of any sort shouldn't be placed in caches. Kids and knives occasionally don't mix well, and lighters can unfortunately lead to a conflagration temptation. Wild animals are really determined individuals, and the larger ones WILL get into that container for the mints or MREs or can of pasta, be the container metal or plastic or otherwise. (Titanium boxes might work, but my pocketbook doesn't allow for them.)

Second, make sure you place your cache so that you can perform timely maintenance on it (or have someone available to do it for you.) Poorly maintained caches can and do reflect badly on the caching community as a whole in some situations. Take it as a given that your cache will leak, take on water, get run over by a wildebeests, or even stolen. It's to be expected, and nobody will hang your shorts from the flagpole for it. At least, the first one or two finders won't; the third or fourth one may ask for it to be archived or removed or start posting not-so-polite logs. Keep abreast of the problems and resolve them as soon as possible.

Third, once you have placed the cache, do your best to take the most accurate coordinates possible. This may involve marking a set, walking away, coming back again and mark another set, etc. Or, if your GPS supports it, take a waypoint average. Rince. Repeat. There's nothing more frustrating to a future hunter than to discover that they were 100-200ft away from where they were supposed to be. It's also good practice to shoot a set of coordinates when you come on your maintenance visits and compare them to the originals. It's not uncommon to get completely different results at different times of day, as well as different times of year (tree cover is mostly to blame for this). If they are markedly different (say, more than 20ft), you might want to fine-tune your posted coordinates.

As long as the rest of us hunters can find it and non-cachers don't, then you've successfully hidden the cache! (Note: It's possible you're a really evil hider. We all know one or two. Someone will find it eventually. Maybe. Darn it!)

"I found it!"

Ah, the battle cry of the happy cache hunter, either to his/herself if alone or maybe out loud if in

a group. You've gone looking for it, and you've found it. Previously, I've discussed some things to keep in mind once you have found the cache. It's time to repeat some of those, as well as going into additional detail.

Inspection

Once you find the cache, give it a look over when you're opening it – this is assuming you have made a mental note how it was placed first. Look for any cracks, leaks, bad seals or any other damage. Normal weathering is ok, gaping holes are not. If you notice something serious, email the cache owner when you get back or at least mention it in your online log. The same goes for the contents – take wet decomposing contents with you to help staunch further mold growth and email the owner. If the cache is in such seriously bad shape that it's devolved into being trash, then go ahead and take it with you... and contact the cache owner as soon as possible (seeing a theme here?).

Logging

Now it's time to leave your mark in the cache log. Some finders use preprinted stickers to affix to a log page in lieu of signing their name. That's fine, but make sure your sticker fits the page and doesn't require an 8"x11" sheet of paper. (Cachers after you will grumble if they don't have a place to sign the log.) If you decide to trade items (see below) or travel bugs, it's nice to jot a note about what you've traded, too. If the cache inspired you, or the walk to the cache was a pleasant one, feel free to make those comments as well. It used to be very common for on-site logs to read more like a never-ending journal written by multiple people. Sadly, it seems this practice has mostly fallen by the wayside (personally, I blame microcaches) but as it's not a requirement, it's completely up to you to decide what to write.

At a minimum, take the time to scratch out the date and your name - "name" in this case, being whatever you choose to use; real name, moniker, handle, caching nickname, etc.

Trading

Trading is completely optional. The guidelines here are pretty simple: If you take something, leave something of equal or increased value. "Value" in this case does not intrinsically mean "money worth." Nor does "quantity" make up for "quality." Here are some good and bad examples:

- Good: You really want that dollar-store compass because you lost yours after falling into a stump hole on the way to the cache. You choose to leave your dollar-store caribiner (or one of your real nice \$25 load-bearing climbing 'biners). In it's place. Either is perfectly acceptable.
- Bad: Leaving a couple of dollar bills – or, worse, a McDonald's happy meal toy – for that really nice Suunto digital compass. That's just wrong, and you're asking for bad karma.
- Good: That small plastic flashlight might come in handy, even if it doesn't have batteries right now. In it's place you leave a little handmade something that only cost you 50 cents in materials, yet took you a half an hour to make. That's a different kind of value, and is fine.
- Bad: "Wow! That Surefire mini-light is awesome! I must have it! In it's place, I'll leave this tennis ball I found on my way to the cache, and this five-pack of travel band-aids, and.. oh! I've got a couple partially used double-A batteries too! To top it off, I'll also leave a dollar! That's a 5-for-1 trade right there!" Wrong. Very wrong. That Surefire is a \$50-100 item. In many contexts, many people would consider that "stealing" as opposed to "trading."

- Good: You don't see anything that strikes your fancy, but you decide to leave something anyway as the trade items might be a bit wanting. Perhaps it's because too many “bad” trades happened before you got there. Nonetheless, leaving a small, nice little something is good.
- Bad: “There's lots of good stuff here, but I didn't bring anything with me to trade. I'm sure no one would really mind, and it won't be missed, so I'll just take this small thing here that caught my eye and not leave anything.” Obviously, this person has no concept of the definition of “trade”, or has chosen to ignore the definition of “steal.” A cache is not your personal resupply drop.
- Good: Taking the cheap McToy-like item and leaving something of “value.”
- Bad: Taking something of value and leaving a cheap McToy-like item. Oh, it's “for the kids?” That's weird; most kids I've seen at caches *skip* the BurgerToy's and take something else. Unless it's Spiderman-related. Fear Spidey!

To parents: If your kid wants to leave his McToy in exchange for “something better,” perhaps that should be telling you something. Bring other items for your child to leave.

To non-parents: McMeal toy's are not good trade items.. and why are you buying Happy Burgers to begin with?)

Again, these are just examples and not all-encompassing, but ideally the concept is in place: at a minimum, trade even and fair, and if possible, leave the cache contents a little better than when you arrived. You would want the same of your own cache, right?

Replacing

Pack up the cache and make sure the container is properly sealed. Since you made a mental note before hand on how it was hidden, replacing it should be pretty simple: put it back exactly (or as close as humanly possible) as you found it. Once done, take a few steps away and survey the area. If you notice any obvious or semi-obvious telltale signs of your activities, take the time to repair them. For instance, if it's a cache in the woods, and you notice a flattened or barren area where you were sitting, take the time to “naturalize” the area so the cache location is not as obvious. Find a nearby branch/stick and “rake” the area to cover any barren spots where you were sitting. If available, take some natural cover from further away and sprinkle thing around to make it look more, well, natural.

Another example would be for urban caches. Make sure you aren't being observed replacing the cache. If it has some sort of blending camouflage, make sure it's properly reattached or reattached to hide it. Again, take a few steps away and eyeball the hiding spot. Can you see the container? Are you supposed to be able to see it? If so, fine, but if not go back and adjust it as needed.

Another common “mistake” that we are all guilty of in regards to finding caches in the woods is “using the social trail” to get to the cache. This is human nature and often can't be helped. If possible, try to leave the cache area in a different direction than you arrived to help lessen the impact.

Congratulations! You've successfully found and replaced the cache! Time to move on to the next one.

Leave No Trace / Cache In-Trash Out

One final comment and ideal to keep in mind while hunting for a cache is “Leave No Trace.” While applicable to replacing the cache and making it just as fun to find for the finders that come after you, it's primary focus is to “leave the area better than you found it.” If there's trash around, put on your civic-minded hat and carry it out (or as much as possible.) Go *around* the pretty flower/plant patch in the woods as opposed to tromping through it and damaging the foliage. If nature calls and the call *must* be answered, give some thought to how and where you answer. (Not in the stream, away from others, not on plants, bury your waste, etc.) If you can walk ten steps away, turn around, and it's quite obvious where you've been, then you need to rethink your technique as well as repair your damage.

THE END!

This concludes the Caching Etiquette Guide. I hope you have found it to be of value, and perhaps have even been entertained (positively or negatively). Many thanks to those who have provided input and suggestions as I've compiled it.

While I am placing this in the public domain for general consumption, I still retain authorship and ownership of this Guide. You may quote or borrow from it as you see fit without prior permission from me; all that I ask is you drop me a line and let me know what you're up to.

I also welcome any and all comments (good and bad).

Thanks for reading!

Jason “Cymbaline” Buckler
email: doobie@attglobal.net
web: <http://cymbaline.us>

Last updated: 04/17/07